

MASKED RAIDER
No 3



MASKED RAIDER

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

A CHARLTON PUBLICATION

And 'TALON' the
Golden Eagle

10¢

STAN
CAMPBELL





WEB COMIC
UNIVERSE.COM

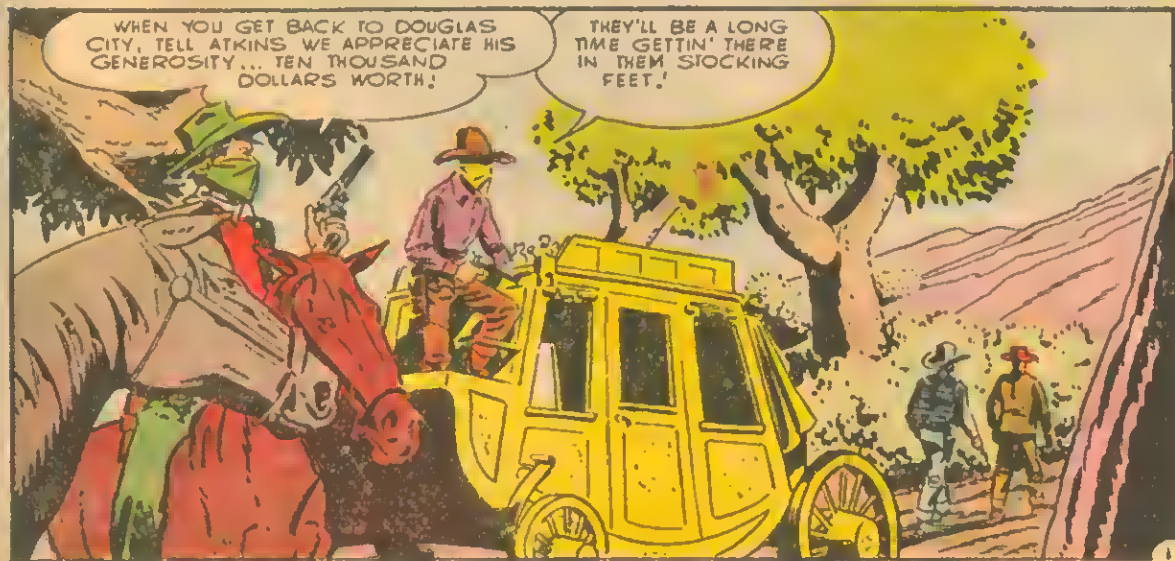
MASKED RAIDER

MISSING GOLD SHIPMENT ABOARD A MISSING STAGE COACH PAINTED GOLD. PRESENT A BAFFLING MYSTERY TO THE SHERIFF OF DOUGLAS CITY... UNTIL HELP ARRIVES IN THE FORM OF THE OLD WEST'S MOST UNUSUAL PAIR OF CRIME FIGHTERS... THE ...

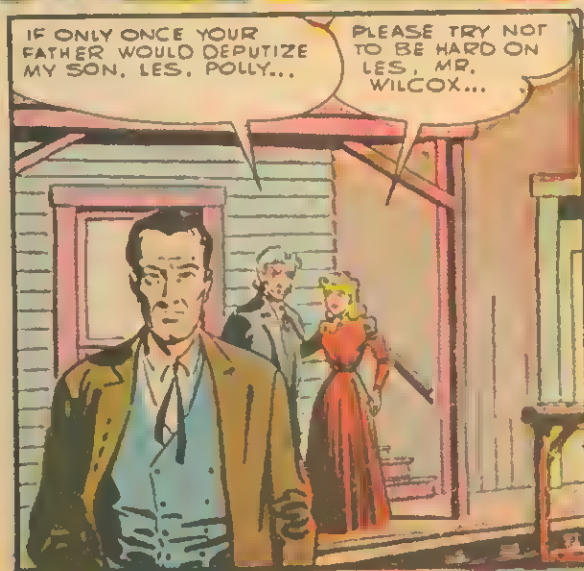
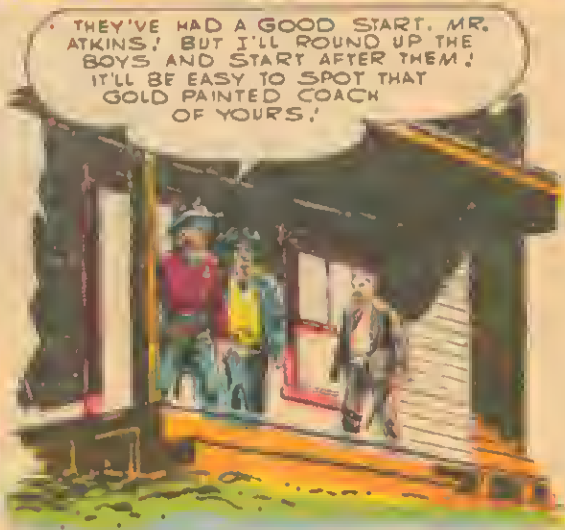
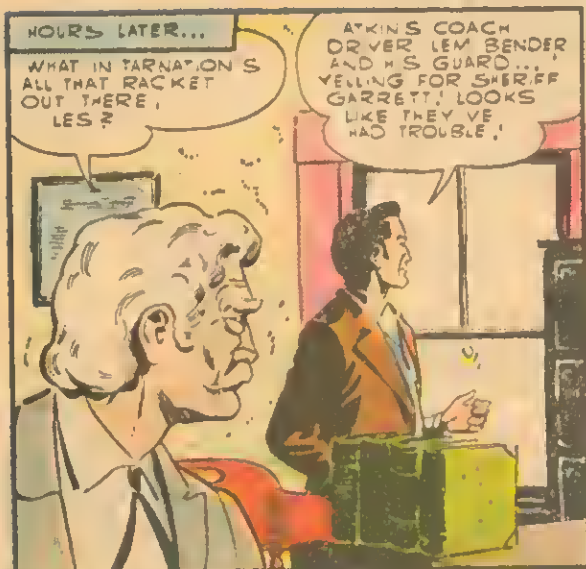
MASKED RAIDER

And 'TALON' the
Golden Eagle

in
THE GOLDEN
COACH



MASKED RAIDER



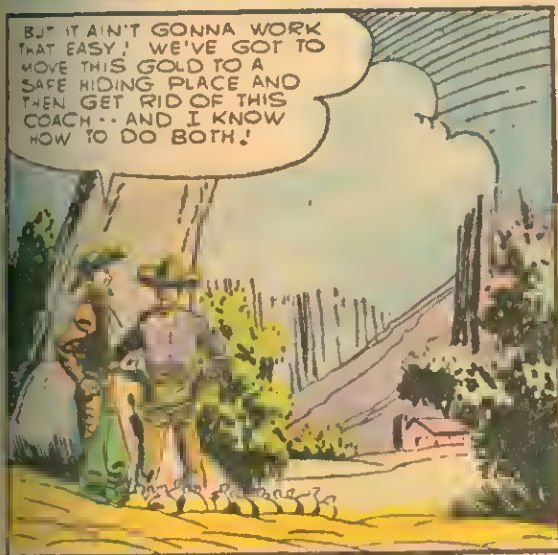
MASKED RAIDER

MEANWHILE THE TWO OUTLAWS ARE EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTIES OF THEIR OWN...



THERE'S NO WAY OF CARRYIN' ALL THEM SACKS OF DUST ON TWO HORSES! WE'LL HAVE TO TAKE WHAT WE CAN AND LEAVE THE REST!

NOW THAT'S WHY THEY PACKED THE DUST THIS WAY INSTEAD OF ALL IN ONE BIG BOX! THEY FIGURED THAT IN CASE OF A STICK-UP BY ONE OR TWO MEN, IT'D BE IMPOSSIBLE TO MOVE ALL THE SACKS AT ONCE!



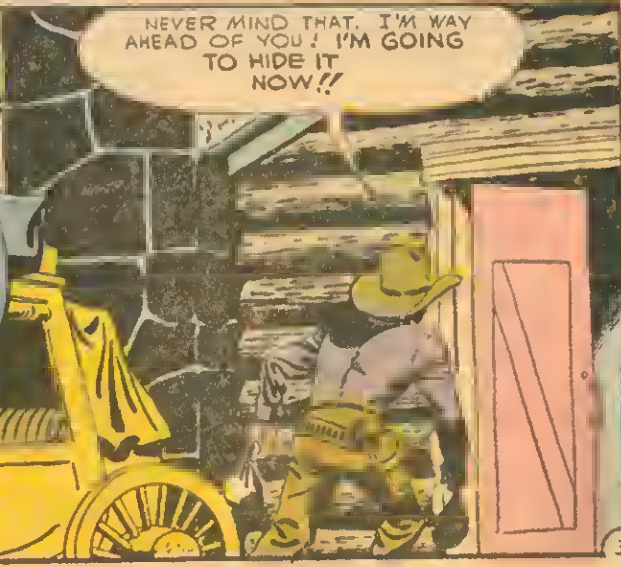
BUT IT AIN'T GONNA WORK THAT EASY! WE'VE GOT TO MOVE THIS GOLD TO A SAFE HIDING PLACE AND THEN GET RID OF THIS COACH-- AND I KNOW HOW TO DO BOTH!



ONE OF ATKIN'S GOLD COACHES... SAY, YOU FELLERS ARE A LITTLE OFF YOUR COURSE, AIN'T YOU?



THERE... THAT'LL QUIET YOU DOWN FOR A WHILE, OLD TIMER! GET THAT GOLD HID... QUICK!



NEVER MIND THAT. I'M WAY AHEAD OF YOU! I'M GOING TO HIDE IT NOW!!

MYSTERY! MAGIC! SCIENCE! FUN!

To Amuse and Amaze Your Friends

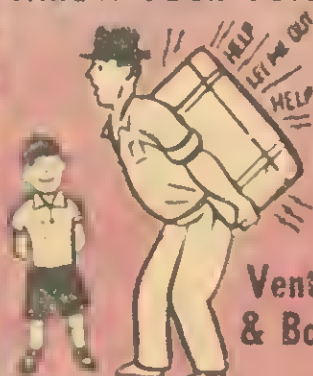
A necessary tool for the amateur magician and a good joke too. Plastic 14 inches long with white tips and a black center. 5 exciting tricks—Rises jumps produces silk etc. No 240 **1.50**

5 IN 1
WAND

Boomerang

Here's something new in target throwing. In case you miss, it comes right back to you, and bingo! you're all set to fire again. More fun than a barrel of monkeys! No 141 **50¢**

THROW YOUR VOICE



Ventro
& Book

Your chance to be a ventriloquist. Throw your voice into trunks, behind doors, and everywhere. Instrument fits in your mouth and out of sight. You'll fool the teacher, your friends, and your family and have fun doing it. Free book on "How to Become a Ventriloquist" No 137 **25¢**

RADIO MIKE

Talk, Sing, Play thru your radio

Sing, laugh, talk, crack jokes from an other room and your voice will be reproduced thru the radio! Fool everybody into thinking it's coming right out of the radio. Easily attached to most standard radios. Made of handsome enameled metal. 4 inches high. No 112 **1.98**

Your chance to have eyes in back of your head. See behind or alongside and no one knows you are watching. Fun every where you go. No 146 **35¢**

LOOK-BACK SCOPE



TALKING TEETH

They move! They talk! They're weird! Guaranteed to shut the clabbermouths up for good. It's really embarrass them. It's a set of big false teeth that when wound up, start to chatter away, like crazy. A great comic effect for false teeth on cold nights. No 513 **1.25**



WHOOPEE CUSHION

Place it on a chair under a cushion. Then watch the fun when someone sits down! It gives forth embarrassing noises. Made of rubber, and inflatable. A scream at parties and gatherings. No 287 **50¢**

TRICK BASEBALL

It bounces cockeyed. It curves. It dips. It's impossible to catch. It's sure to set all the kids on the block spinning after it. There's a barrel of fun in every bounce of this amazing baseball. No 158 **50¢**



POWERFUL MANY EXCLUSIVE ITEMS AVAILABLE

COMPACT ONE TUBE RADIO

Pocket Size. Brings in stations up to 1000 miles away

Modern electronics makes this wonderful set possible. So small it will fit in a pocket. Everything is supplied for you. Easy to assemble in a few minutes with just a screw driver. No soldering required. Really powerful too. Announcements of stations up to 1000 miles away come in so loud and clear you'd think they were right near home. Learn many useful and important things about radio. No 205 **3.98**



BLACK EYE JOKE

Show them the "naughty" pictures inside. They'll twist it and turn it to see, but all they do is blacken their eyes. No 216 **25¢**

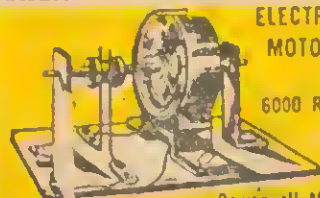
Costume Set Designed for Every Boy

Style 160 — For you he-men, we've got the newest, most exciting and tremendous play suit of its time. A complete Superman outfit in fine durable washable rayon gabardine. Outfit includes red cape with screened Superman figure, navy and red suit with gilt figure "S", and belt. Be first to get this wonderful outfit. Sizes 4-14. **6.98**



ELECTRIC MOTOR

6000 RPM



—Drives all Models

This is an offer that sounds unbelievable but it's being made just the same. Yes, you can have an actual electric motor for just 50¢. This compact little kit makes it a cinch to build this high power motor. And the fun you are going to get from using it. It's so simple and your motor is ready to turn out 6000 r.p.m. and power to work for you. The coils of this remarkable motor actually turn at the rate of 1500 feet per minute. No 052 **Only 50¢**

JOY BUZZER



The most popular joke novelty in years! Wind up and wear it like a ring. When you shake hands, it almost raises the victim off his feet with a "shocking" sensation. Absolutely harmless. No 239 **Only 50¢**

10 DAY TRIAL FREE

HONOR HOUSE PRODUCTS CORP., Lynbrook, N. Y. Dept. 43
Cannot ship orders totalling less than \$1.00. D.
Push me the items listed below. If I am not satisfied I may return any part of my purchase after 10 days free trial for full refund of the purchase price.

ITEM	NAME OF ITEM	HOW MANY	TOTAL PRICE

☐ I enclose _____ in full payment. The Honor House Products Corp. will pay postage.
☐ Send C.O.D. I will pay postman on delivery plus a few cents postage.

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

MASKED RAIDER



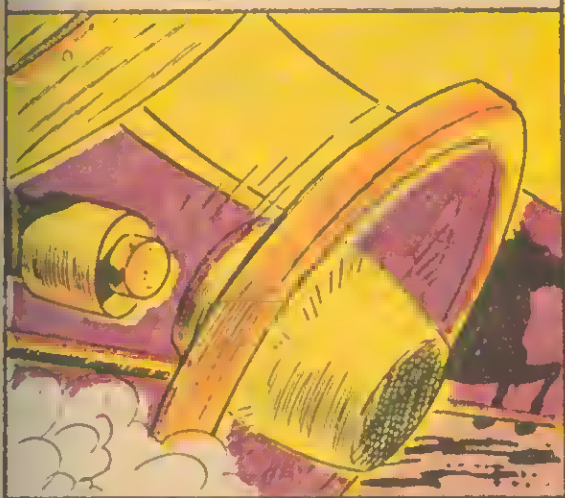
AS THE COACH STARTS DOWN THE HILL, SHERIFF GARRETT AND HIS POSSE ROUND THE CURVE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE ROAD...

WHOA! THERE'S THE STAGE NOW! LOOK! OLD MAN OAKERSON IS ON IT!

AT A DEAD GALLOP! HE'LL NEVER MAKE IT! HE'S TRYING TO JUMP!

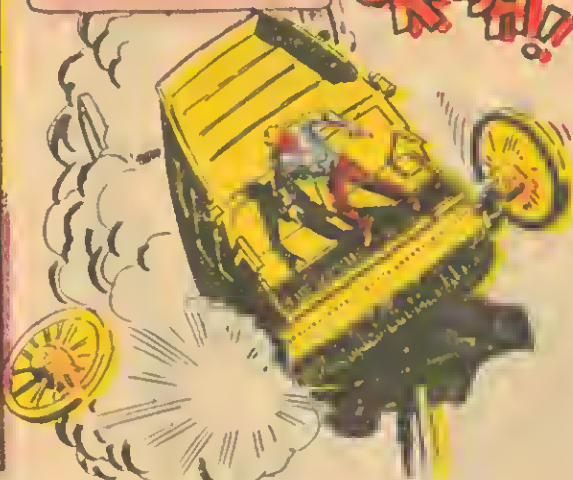


BUT THE OLD MAN NEVER HAS A CHANCE TO LEAP FREE--- FOR AT THAT MOMENT---



--THE WHEEL COMES OFF AND HE IS THROWN TO THE GROUND---

CRASH!!



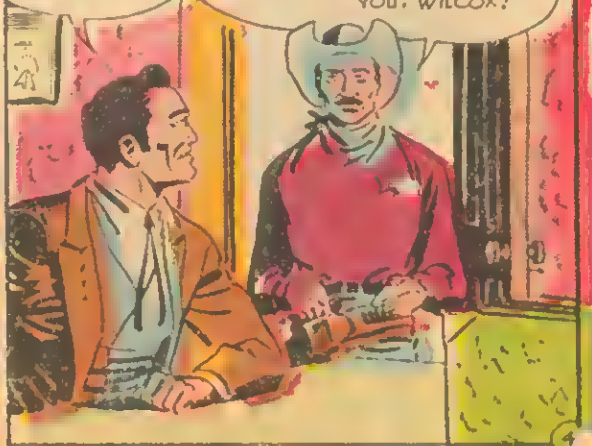
NO SIGN OF THE GOLD, SHERIFF!

COURSE NOT! HE HAD PLENTY OF TIME TO HIDE IT! FUNNY... I'D NEVER HAVE TAKEN OLD MAN OAKERSON FOR A HIGHWAYMAN! HE'S OUT COLD!

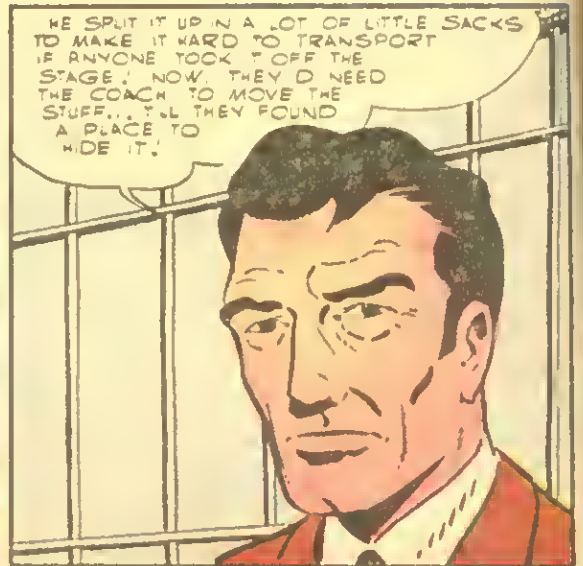
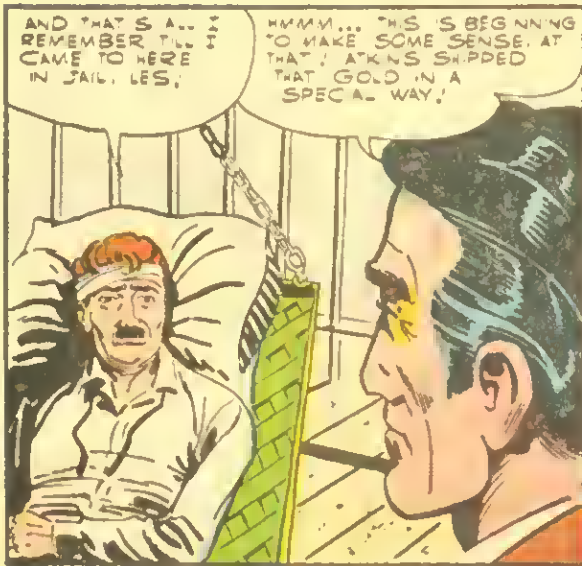


OLD MAN OAKERSON! THAT'S HARD TO BELIEVE, SHERIFF!

YEP! IT WAS FOR US, TOO! BUT WE CAUGHT HIM DRIVING THE STAGE, AND HE'D HAD TIME TO HIDE THE GOLD! ANYWAY, HE WANTS TO SEE YOU, WILCOX!



MASKED RAIDER

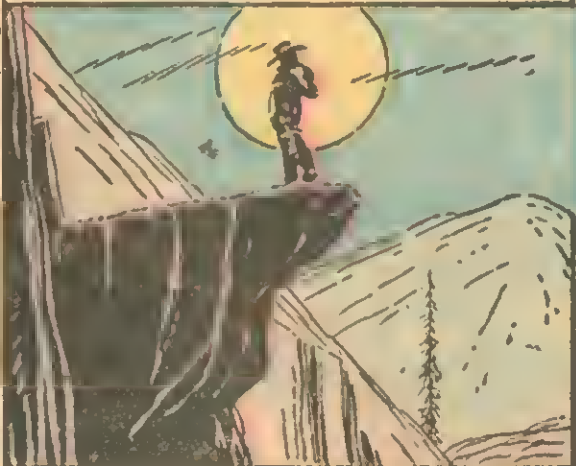


MASKED RAIDER

A SHORT TIME LATER, FROM THE SECRET CAVE IN THE HILLS, APPEARS THE FIGURE OF A MAN WHO STRIKES TERROR TO THE HEARTS OF THE WEST'S BOLDEST OUTLAWS... THE MASKED RAIDER...



MOMENTS LATER, FROM A ROCKY CREST ABOVE THE CAVE, THE FABULOUS GUN-FIGHTER WHISTLES A SIGNAL INTO THE DARKENING SKIES...



WE'VE GOT A NIGHT'S WORK AHEAD OF US, TALON... AND NO TIME TO LOSE! THE FUTURE OF AN INNOCENT MAN IS AT STAKE TONIGHT!



MIGHTY OBLIGING OF GARRETT TO LOCK UP THE OLD MAN AND GIVE US THE RUN OF THE PLACE TONIGHT!

SURE WAS! BY MORNING WE'LL HAVE THE GOLD STASHED AWAY WHERE THEY'LL NEVER THINK OF LOOKING!



AS THE OUTLAWS ENTER THE OLD MAN'S CABIN, THEY FAIL TO HEAR THE SLIGHT SWISH OF HUGE WINGS HIGH ABOVE THEM...

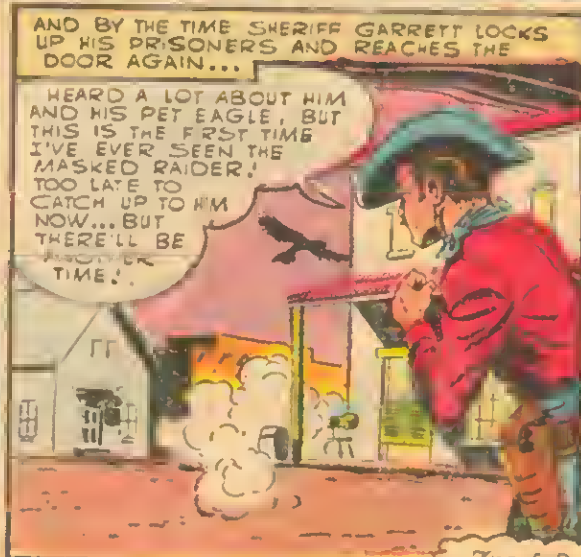
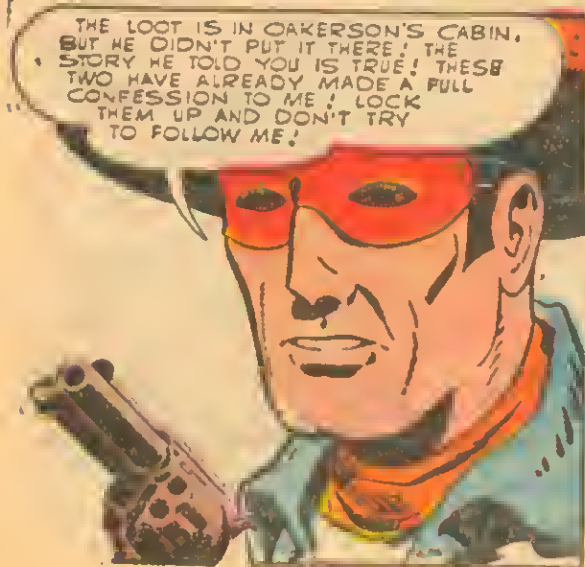


LOOK OUT, IT'S...

THE MASKED RAIDER...



MASKED RAIDER

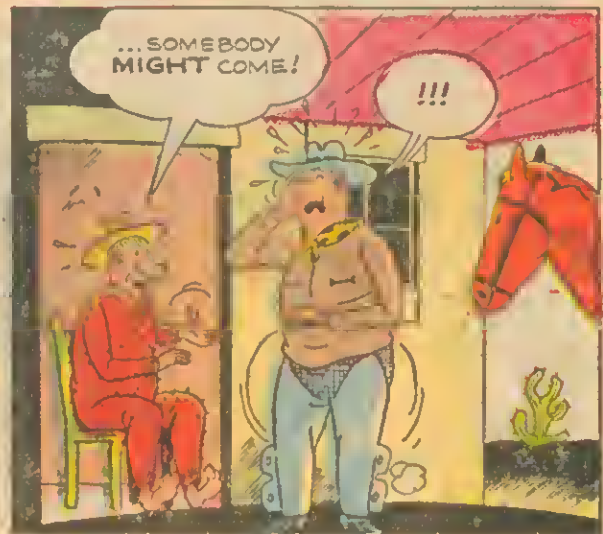
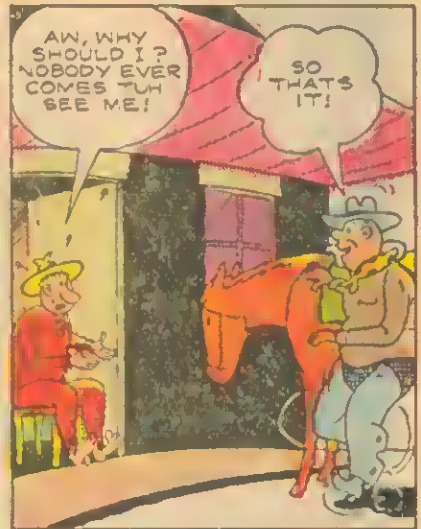
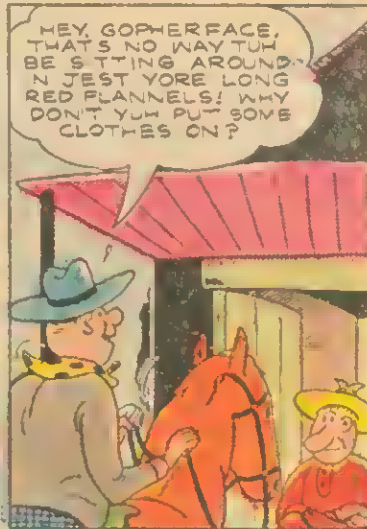
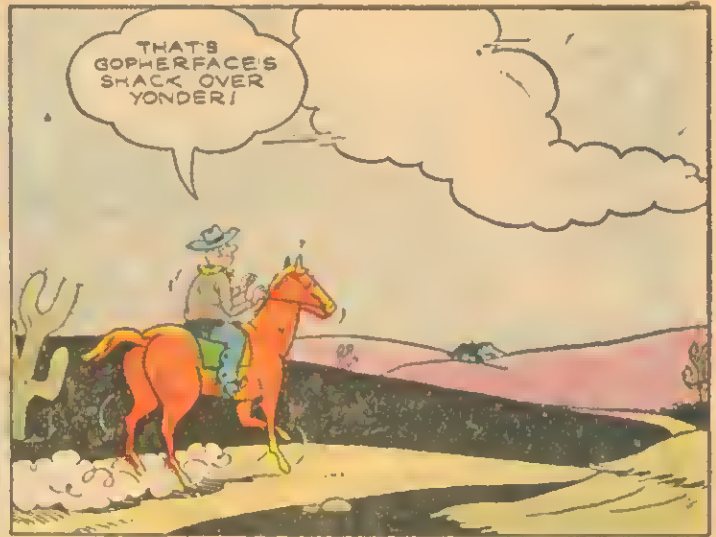


The END

MASKED RAIDER

gopher- face

THE MAD HATTER!



MASKED RAIDER

Rocky Lane and "THE HOAX!"

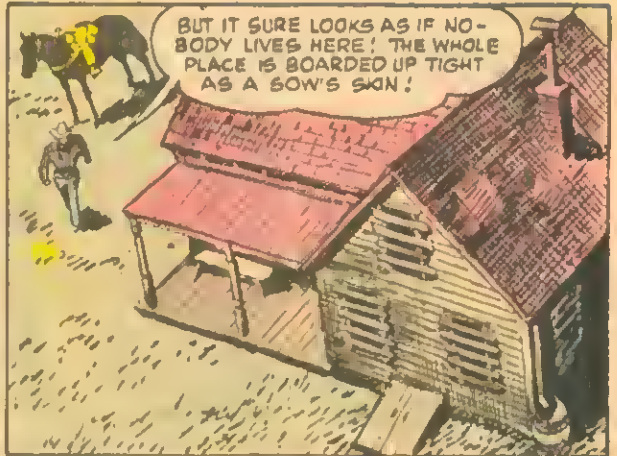
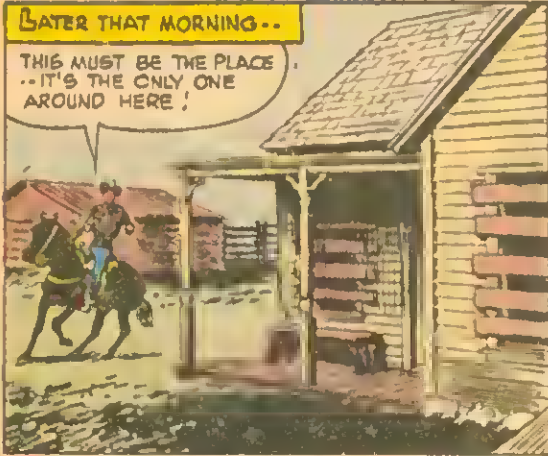
DID THE OLD HOUSE, NAILED SHUT AND TIGHTLY BOARDED UP, CONTAIN JUST AN ECCENTRIC SOURDOUGH PLAYING A MACABRE JOKE ON THE WORLD? OR WAS THERE REALLY A CRIMINAL POISED TO STRIKE? ROCKY FINDS THE ANSWER AS HE EXPOSES... "THE HOAX!"



MASKED RAIDER

LATER THAT MORNING--

THIS MUST BE THE PLACE.
--IT'S THE ONLY ONE
AROUND HERE!



BUT IT SURE LOOKS AS IF NO-
BODY LIVES HERE! THE WHOLE
PLACE IS BOARDED UP TIGHT
AS A SOW'S SNOUT!

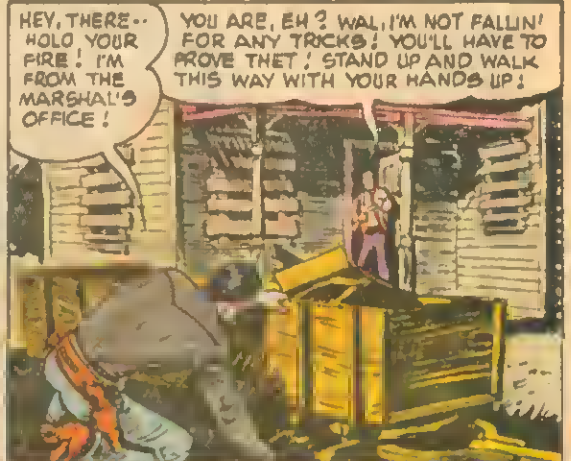
BUT SUDDENLY--

SOMEBODY
IS HOME!
ALL RIGHT,
AND I'M A
SITTING
DUCK
OUT
HERE IN
THE OPEN!



HEY, THERE--
HOLD YOUR
FIRE! I'M
FROM THE
MARSHAL'S
OFFICE!

YOU ARE, EH? WELL, I'M NOT FALLIN'
FOR ANY TRICKS! YOU'LL HAVE TO
PROVE THAT! STAND UP AND WALK
THIS WAY WITH YOUR HANDS UP!



ALL RIGHT, I'M COMING!
IF YOU'RE REALLY A
MARSHAL, TOSS
YOUR BADGE ON THE
PORCH!

THAT'S NEAR ENOUGH --- TOSS YOUR
BADGE, IF YOU'VE GOT ONE!

THERE IT
IS, PARTNER!

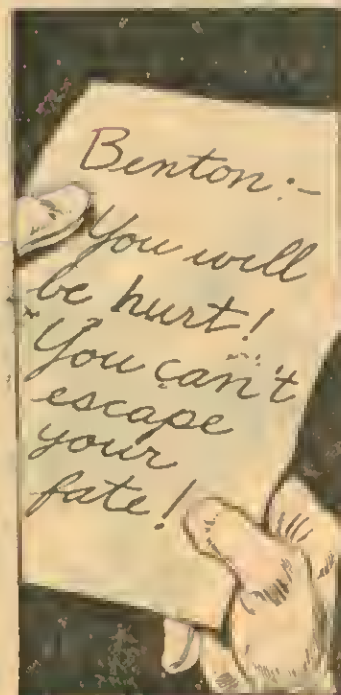
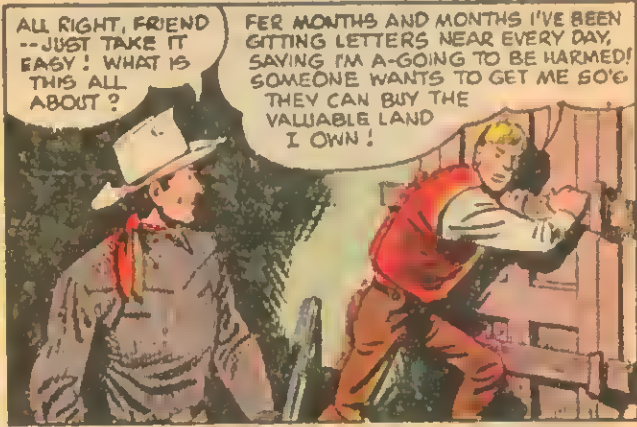
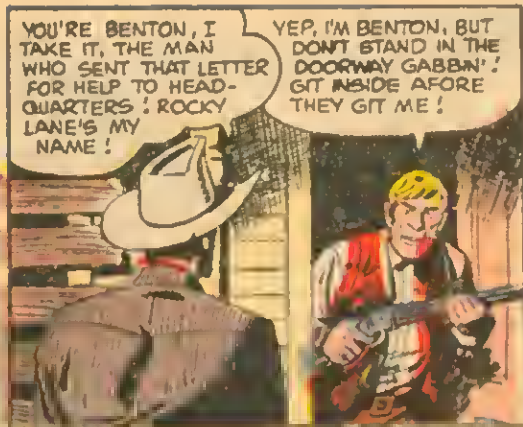


MOMENTS LATER--

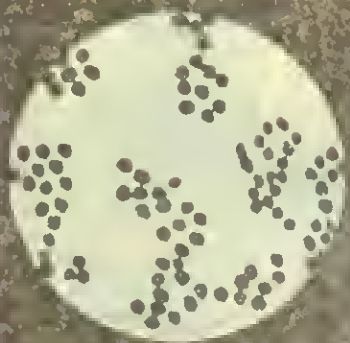
ALL RIGHT, COME IN--
GIT A MOVE ON IT!



MASKED RAIDER



KILL THESE HAIR-DESTROYING GERMS



Staphylococcus albus



Corynebacterium acnes



Pityrosporum ovale

SAVE YOUR HAIR

Beware of your itchy scalp, hair loss, dandruff, head scales, unpleasant head odors! Nature may be warning you of approaching baldness. Heed Nature's warning! Treat your scalp to scientifically prepared Ward's Formula.

Millions of trouble-breeding bacteria, living on your sick scalp (see above) are killed on contact. Ward's Formula kills not one, but *all 3* types of these destructive scalp germs now recognized by many medical authorities as a significant cause of baldness. Kill these germs—don't risk letting them kill your hair growth.

ENJOY THESE 5 BENEFITS IMMEDIATELY

1. Kills germs that retard normal hair growth—*on contact*
2. Removes ugly infectious dandruff—*fast*
3. Brings hair-nourishing blood to scalp—*quickly*
4. Stops annoying scalp itch and burn—*instantly*
5. Starts wonderful self-massaging action—*within 3 seconds*

• Once you're bald, that's *it*, friends! There's nothing you can do. Your hair is gone forever. So are your chances of getting it back. But Ward's Formula, used as directed, keeps your sick scalp free of itchy dandruff, seborrhea, and stops the hair loss they cause. Almost at once your hair looks thicker, more attractive and alive.

We don't ask you to believe *us*. Thousands of men and women—first skeptical just as you are—have *proved* what we *say*. Here's our **GUARANTEE**. Try Ward's Formula in your own home for only 10 days. You must enjoy *all* the benefits we claim—or we return not only the price you pay—but **DOUBLE YOUR MONEY BACK** on return of unused portion. You are the judge. Send no money. Pay postman only \$2 plus a few cents postage, or save postage by sending \$2 with order. **ACT NOW TO SAVE YOUR HAIR. SEND COUPON TODAY!**

WARD LABORATORIES, Dept. 6607-B

19 West 44th St. New York 36, N. Y.

Name

Address

City Zone State

☐ I enclose \$2.00, send prepaid

☐ Send C.O.D., I will pay \$2.00 plus postage

DOUBLE MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

MASKED RAIDER

THE NIGHT'S NEAR OVER
AND THERE HASN'T BEEN
A SIGN OF ANYONE
GUNNING FOR BENTON---
-- (YAWN)!



AND WHEN MORNING COMES ---

I'VE BEEN THINKING, BENTON, THAT
SINCE THE YARMINT DIDN'T SHOW UP
LAST NIGHT, I'LL GO INTO TOWN TO
TRY TO GET A
LEAD ON HIM! IT'S
THE ONLY WAY TO
GET AT THE BOTTOM
OF THIS!

YOU--- YOU
MEAN YOU'RE
A-GOING TO
LEAVE ME
ALONE,
MARSHAL?



BUT
YOU'LL
COME
BACK,
MARSHAL

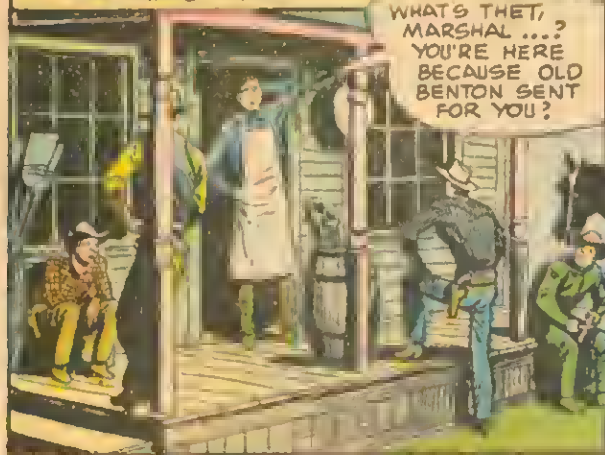
PROMISE
ME!

I'LL COME BACK, BENTON!
YOU'LL BE SAFE SO LONG
AS YOU STAY IN HERE!
NOBODY COULD GET IN
THE WAY YOU HAVE THE
PLACE BOARDED UP!



BUT LATER, WHEN ROCKY MENTIONS BENTON IN
THE NEARBY TOWN ---

WHAT'S THET,
MARSHAL?
YOU'RE HERE
BECAUSE OLD
BENTON SENT
FOR YOU?



HEY, BOYS --- DID YOU ---
HO-HO --- HEAR THET...?
BENTON'S ASKED THE
MARSHAL'S OFFICE FER
PROTECTION --- HO-HO-
HO!

?

HA-HA-
HA!

HAW-
HAW!



WHAT'S SO FUNNY
ABOUT A CRIMINAL
SENDING A MAN
WARNING
LETTERS?

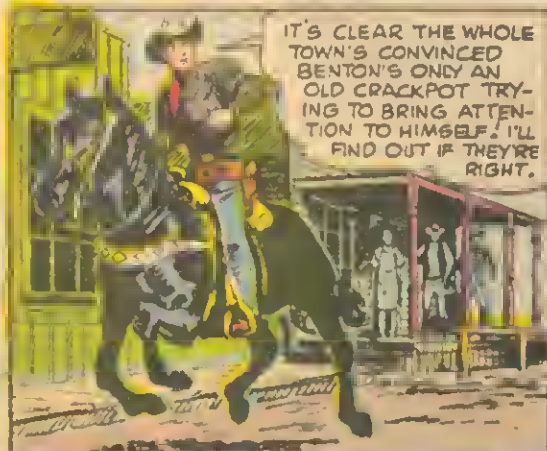
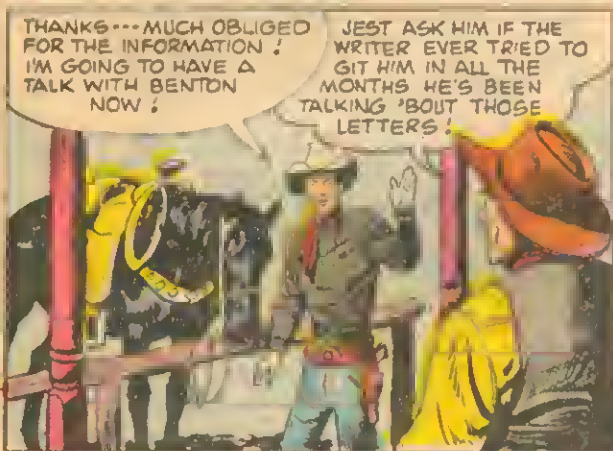
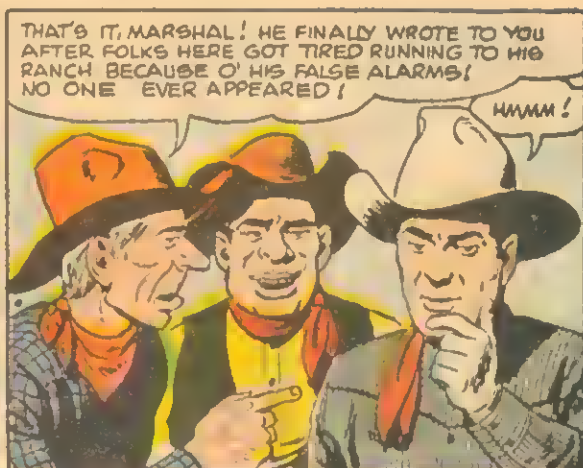
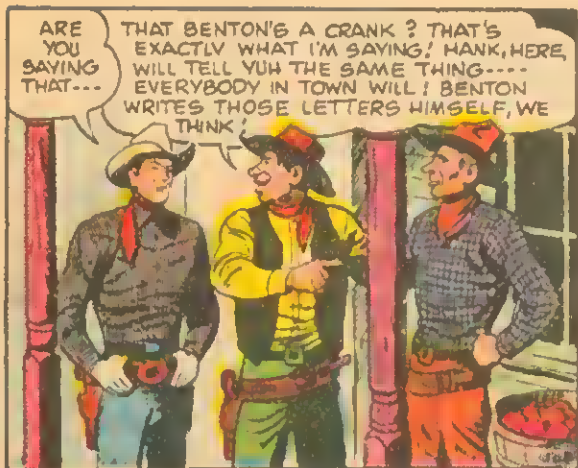
HAW-HAW --- YOU TELL HIM, JED!
HAW-HAW! HE FOOLED THE
MARSHAL'S OFFICE!



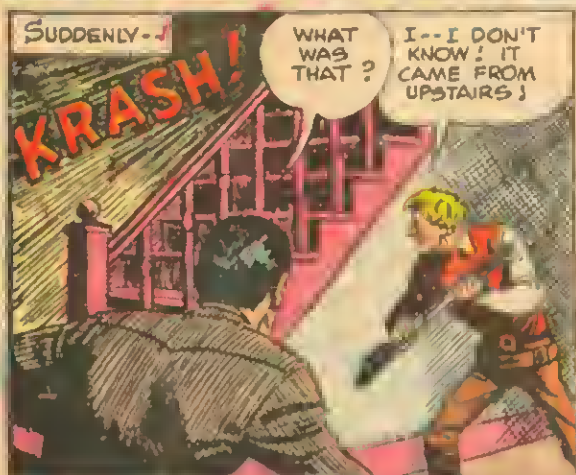
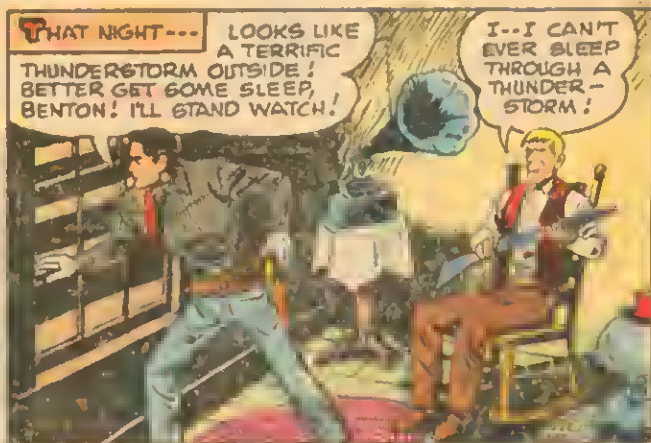
MARSHAL, BENTON'S BEEN SAYING THE
SAME THING 'BOUT THOSE LETTERS FOR
MONTHS NOW! HE'S HAD EVERYBODY IN
TOWN UP THERE PROTECTING HIM AT ONE
TIME OR ANOTHER!



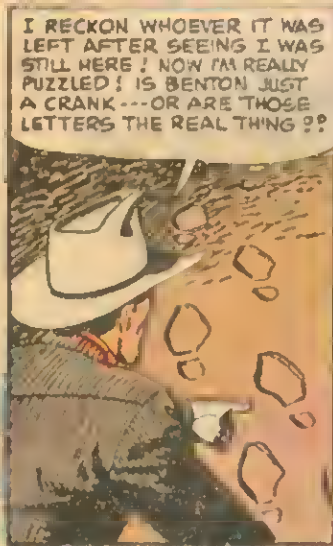
MASKED RAIDER



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MASKED RAIDER



I NOTICED THE BOARDS OVER THIS WINDOW ARE LIGHTER THAN THE OTHERS! HERE GOES!



A SECRET DOOR BUILT IN THE WALL AT THE BACK OF THE HOUSE! SO, THAT'S HOW THE VAR-MINTS GOT IN WITHOUT MY SEEING THEM!

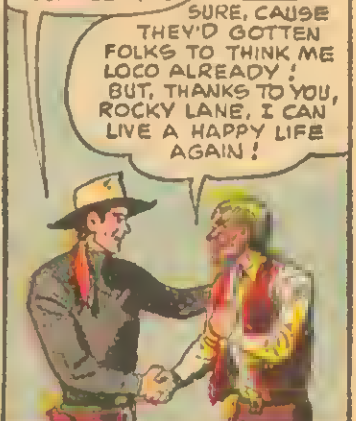


AND LATER, AFTER THE VAR-MINTS ARE SAFE IN JAIL---

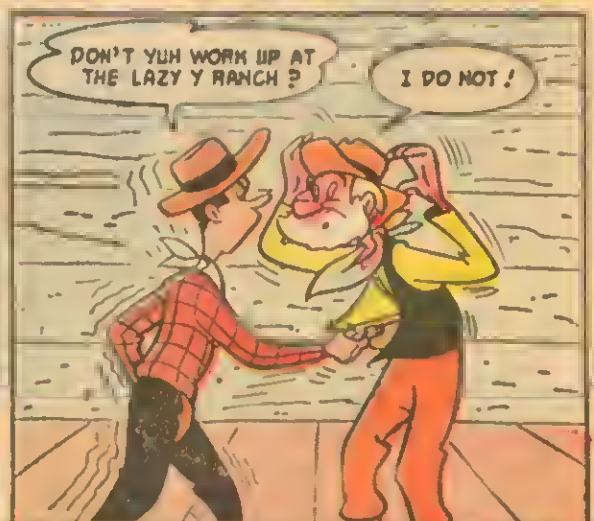
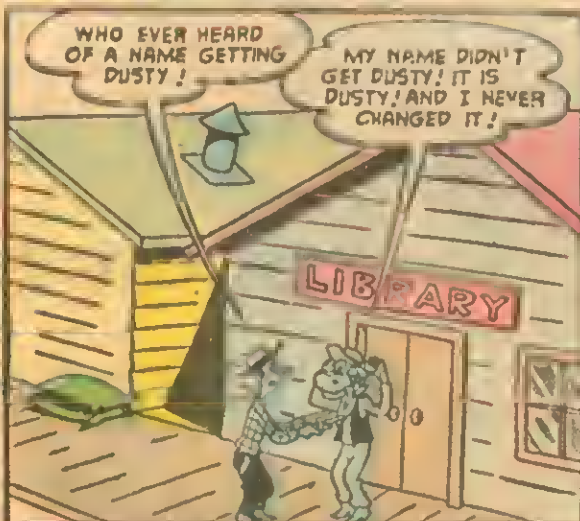
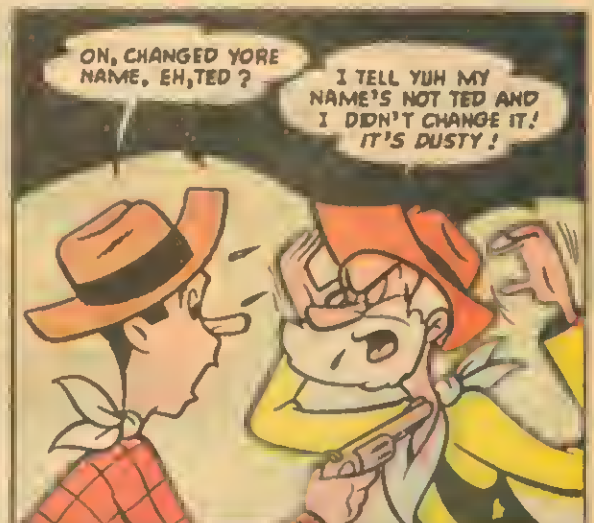
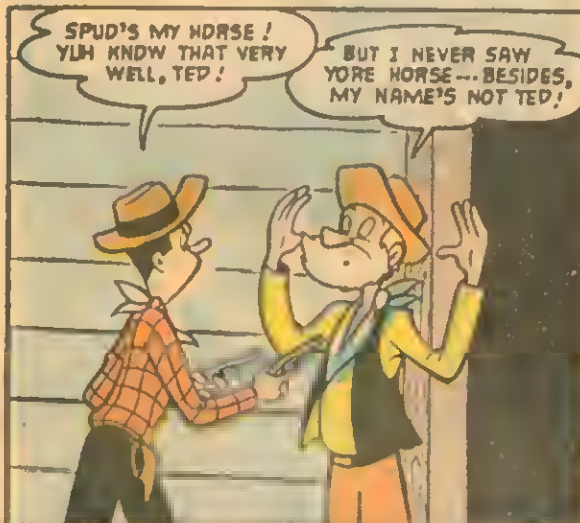
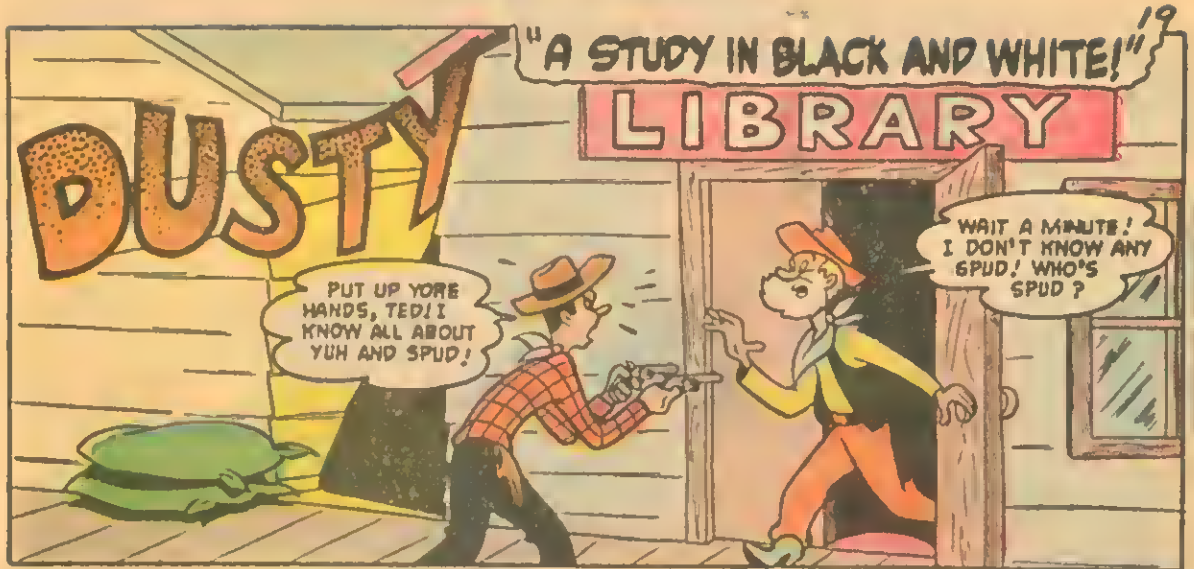
SO FREEMAN DISCOVERED THE SECRET DOOR IN MY HOUSE I NEVER KNEW ABOUT FROM A SET OF OLD PLANS HE FOUND BEFORE I BOUGHT THE PLACE! THEN HE AND HIS PARTNER STARTED THEIR PLAN TO DO ME IN AND TAKE OVER MY LAND!



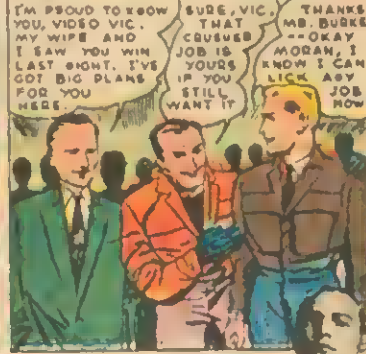
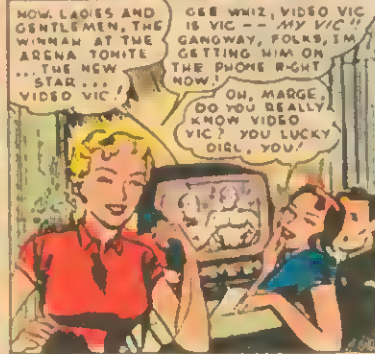
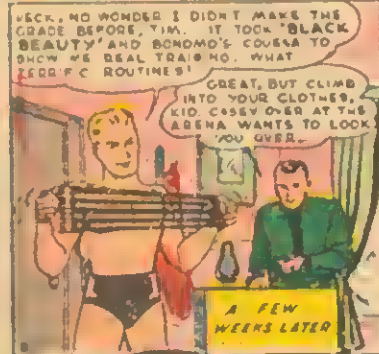
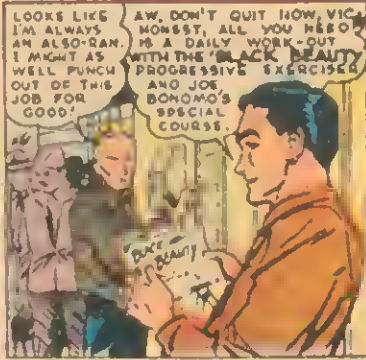
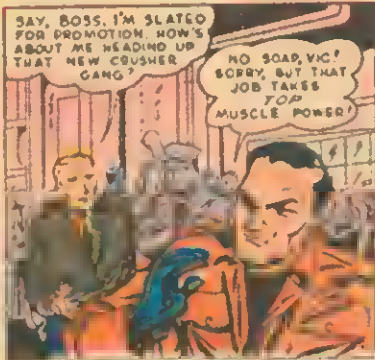
WHEN THEY RECKONED THIS WAS GET IN PEOPLE'S MINDS, THEY ENTERED BY THE SECRET DOOR TO GET YOU WITH YOUR OWN GUN SO FOLKS O NATURALLY FIGURE YOU'D DONE YOURSELF IN!



MASKED RAIDER



How 'BLACK BEAUTY' TURNS AN ALSO-RAN INTO VIDEO VIC!



FREE

WITH EVERY COURSE

NEW 3-CABLE

BLACK BEAUTY

PROGRESSIVE EXERCISER

NAVY CUTY

DEVELOP REAL POWER

INCREASE YOUR STRENGTH • BUILD YOUR BODY

BECOME AN ALL-AROUND WINNER

YOUR MONEY BACK IF NOT SATISFIED

SENT WITH EVERY COURSE FREE



WIN FRIENDS • GAIN POPULARITY • BE A SUCCESS

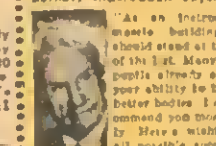
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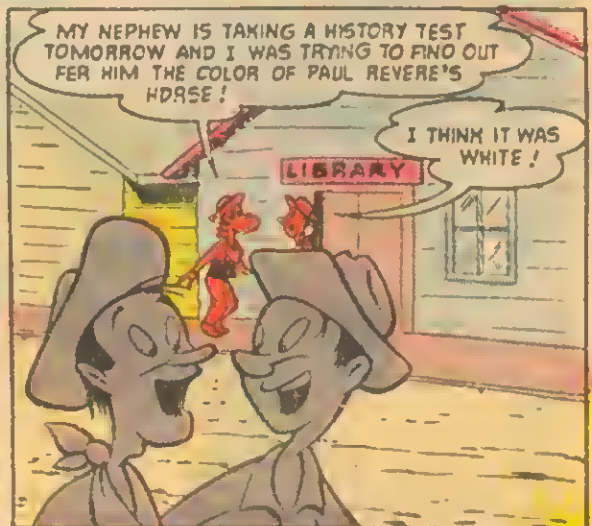
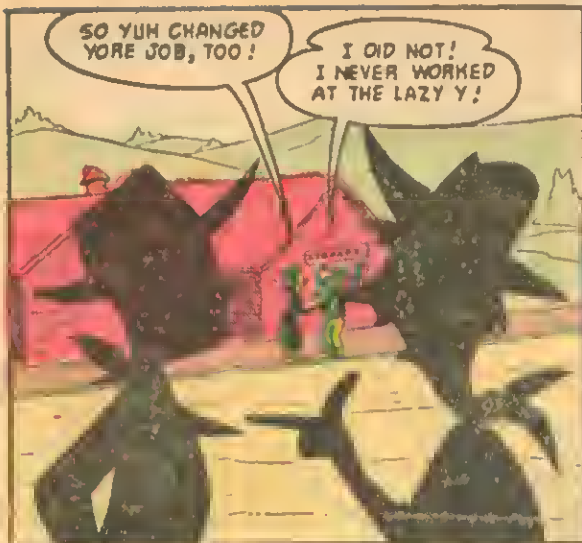
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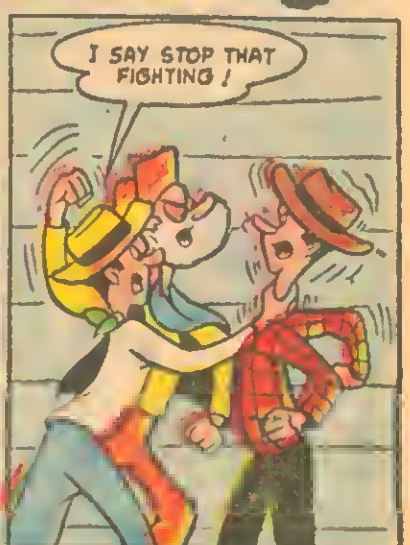
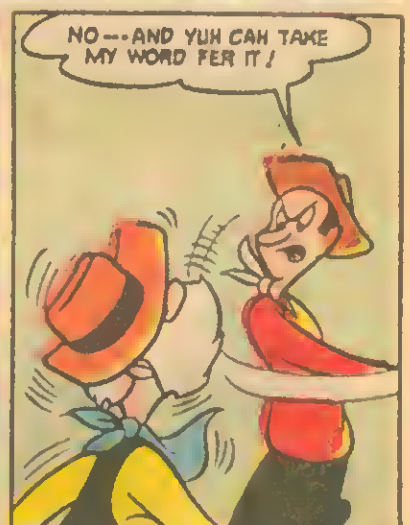
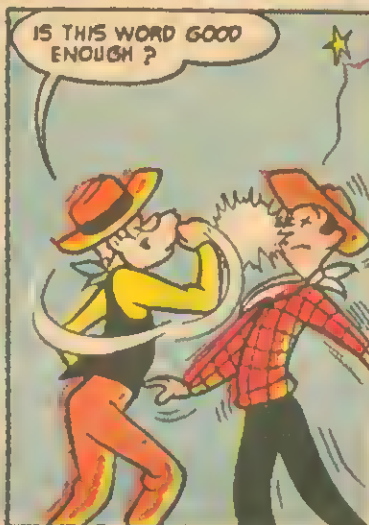
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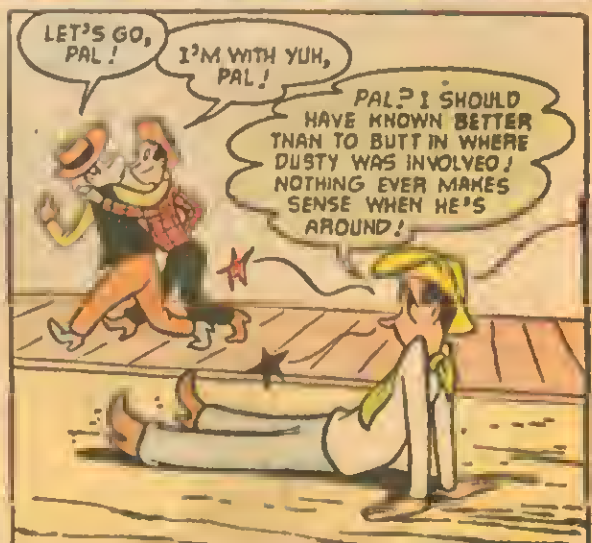
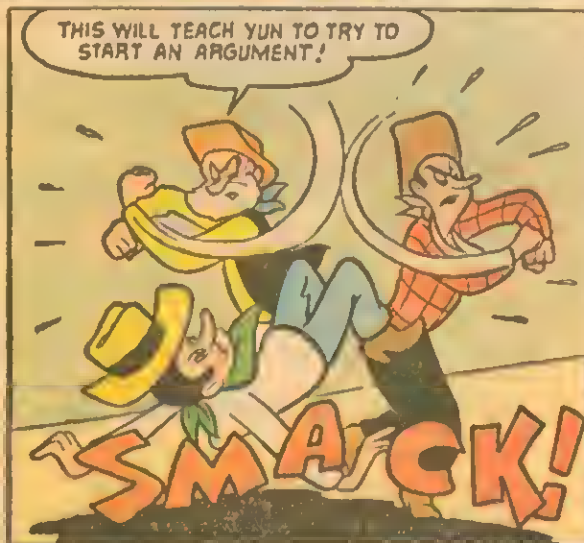
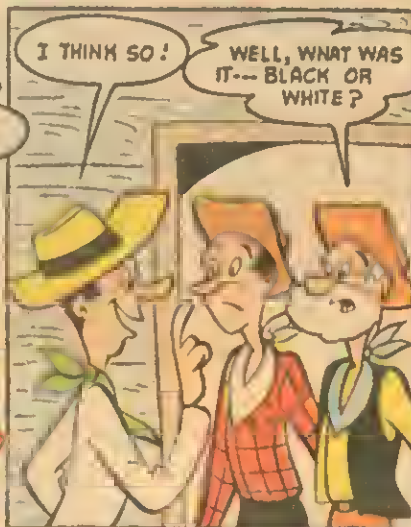
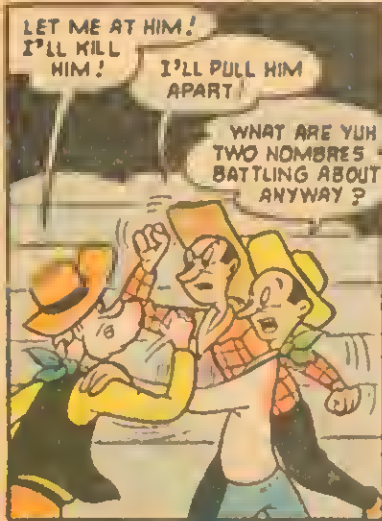
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THE GOLD BANDITS



BIG Jim Randal stood spraddle-legged before the warm crackling flames of the campfire and thrust his tight-clenched fists deeper into his mackinaw pockets. Flinty-eyed, he studied the grim faces of the six men in a rough semi-circle before him.

"We stayed in these hills too long," he said, his weather-lined face serious. "El Lobo and his gang of gold thieves have the only pass out of here bottled up."

A cold night wind swept down out of the hills, and banks of leaden snow clouds hid the moon. The breath of winter had come with icy suddenness to warn the handful of prospectors who still roamed these hills, searching, blasting into bedrock for the valuable yellow metal. The diehards.

"We'll freeze to death when the blizzards hit," shivered grizzled Nugget Jones.

"We're the last men up here," Randal said. "And El Lobo's waiting below like a vulture for us to come out—so he can steal our gold!"

A heavy-set prospector shook his head. "After all that slavin' and diggin' and blastin' this past summer?"

"We got no choice," Nugget Jones chirped. "Either we stay here with our gold and freeze to death, or we ride down and make that coyote, El Lobo, a present of it . . ."

"Unless we could trick him," interrupted Randal.

"Trick El Lobo? You're batty, Randal," cut in hatchet-faced Slim Dawson. "Old Pick Manton tried and lost. Only last week he left for below. Told me he had a plan to outfox El Lobo." He scowled up at Randal. "Mebbe Pick told you about the special strongboxes he had built in town before he came up here?"

Randal nodded. "Had them fitted with padlocks. Matter of fact, he gave me one of the boxes."

Dawson spat. "El Lobo caught him below and blew off those fancy padlocks neatly as you please with a six-gun!" He turned toward the men. "Don't fool yourselves—let's give the gold to El Lobo and git out of here alive!"

"Not me, for one," said Randal quietly.

The men chorused agreement.

"Ever since Pick Manton left, I've had an idea—and if it works, we could get our gold out safely through El Lobo before winter sets in," Randal continued.

"We're listening," grunted Nugget.

Randal leaned forward. "We leave together in a band. One man's wagon carries all the

gold. El Lobo wouldn't have time to nab more than three of us and, while he's doing that, the guy with the gold gets away."

"Sounds good," said the heavy-set prospector. "But supposing El Lobo nabs the man carrying the gold?"

"He'll have to get away while El Lobo's chasing the others. Besides," Randal drawled, "we'll have the advantage because El Lobo will never suspect that only one of us has the paydirt. Loaded, our wagons all look the same."

Nugget's head shook. "Big risk for the guy carrying the yellow stuff."

"I'll make the run, if you men trust me," Randal said.

There was a brief buzz of excitement and, finally, the men agreed.

"It's our only chance," Randal told them finally. "Bring all your gold to me. Pack your equipment on your wagons and be ready to leave an hour before dawn."

An hour before dawn, Big Jim had just finished lashing his last remaining box of blasting powder onto his wagon when the other prospectors arrived.

Nugget Jones gave him a lift with the heavy strongbox that Pick Manton had given him a few days earlier.

"Heavy!" grunted Jones. "But what's in that box represents a life's work for most of us, Jim."

Randal nodded, then, loud enough for everyone to hear, "Remember, El Lobo will be waiting for us where Commanche Pass opens out into the plains. It's the only way out of here, so when we reach it, spread out and keep going. Let's go!"

And when dawn broke finally, the little caravan had passed almost through the complete length of Commanche Pass. Big Jim knew the men were jittery. He was himself.

The plains lay just ahead through the narrow slit of the pass exit and, upon reaching, that opening, Nugget Jones' long bullwhip cracked and his horses bolted through the narrow pass.

Almost instantly, a pistol shot ripped the leaden air!

"El Lobo!" Nugget screamed.

"Keep going! Spread out!" Randal yelled and, by this time, he had reached the opening himself. Then, he was out, heading pell mell

MASKED RAIDER

for the plains ahead. Pistol and rifle shots whanged around him, over his head, thudded sharply into the wagon sides. But he kept on.

Up ahead, Jones' bouncing wagon veered sharply to the right. The heavy-set prospector veered left.

Then, from either side, horsemen sprang from behind big boulders and, with drawn guns, came thundering full tilt at Randal. Almost at once, the riders ignored the other prospectors.

Something had gone wrong! The plan *wasn't* going to work!

Brief seconds later, one of El Lobo's outlaws rode abreast of Randal's horses, seized the reins and pulled him to a halt. "Hola!" the outlaw shouted. "We have him, El Lobo!"

A huge Mexican dressed in buffalo robe and sombrero came riding up leisurely. Other outlaws, guns drawn, rode at his back. El Lobo looked closely at Big Jim, then at the strongbox lashed to the wagon. "Si, this is the one we want," he grumbled. His dark, beady eyes came back to Randal, lip curling. "So, your attempt to trick El Lobo is not so good, eh?"

Randal bristled with anger. "How'd you know I was the one carrying the gold?"

El Lobo chuckled. "The eyes and ears of El Lobo travel far." He turned abruptly and addressed his men. "Get that strongbox off and open it at once!"

"It's another one of those trick boxes with a padlock on it, like the one Manton had," spat one of the outlaws, grunting as he helped lift the box from Randal's wagon.

"Bah!" snarled the bandit chief, leaving a man to guard Randal. "When will these fools learn it does not pay to try tricks on El Lobo!" Deftly, he drew out his six-shooter and laid the muzzle flush against the padlock on the strongbox. "Watch!" he bellowed.

The outlaws gathered around their chief, El Lobo squeezed the trigger. The report was deafening. Bright orange flame spat against padlock and hasp. Lead smashed the metal with a loud snap.

But at that split second, the strongbox lid flew back violently on its hinges. A bright blinding flash of brilliant flame spewed up at the outlaws around it. There was a low, throaty rumble like thunder. Thick palls of black smoke burst out.

El Lobo and his men fell back screaming, clawing frantically at their eyes.

"Help!" gasped the bandit chief. "I-I cannot see! I-I am blind! Help me!"

But the others were equally as helpless, fingers tearing at their flash-shocked eyes.

Instantly, Big Jim leaped off the wagon, knocked the startled outlaw who had been guarding him to the ground, scooped up his

six-gun and, pointing it skyward, triggered it three times.

When Nugget Jones, Slim Dawson, and the other prospectors returned to the scene, Randal had lined the blinded outlaws up against his wagon and had disarmed them.

Nugget Jones came over, wide-eyed. "Good thing you told me back at your camp to keep my ears open for three shots. B-but what in Sam Hill happened?" he sputtered.

El Lobo opened the wrong box, that's all," Randal commented quietly.

"We heard the explosion," Jones said, looking at the half-shattered strongbox. "Hey! What'd you have in there?"

"Flat shale rocks, with a good layer of blasting powder on top," Randal announced.

"I'll be danged!" exclaimed Dawson. "The gun flash set off the powder! Who gave you that idea?"

"You!" Randal said. "When you told me how they blasted Pick Manton's padlocks off with gunfire. I just figured they'd do the same thing again."

"A mite crafty," Slim added. "Say, give me a gun, Randal—it'll be a pleasure toting these birds to jail personally."

Randal smiled sourly. "You won't need the gun, Slim, 'cause you'll be right in there with 'em!"

"You're loco, Randal! You just said I helped you, that it was my story about Pick Manton that . . ."

"Right," cut in Randal. "A story you knew too well. How else could you know El Lobo blasted those padlocks with bullets . . . if you weren't right there with him when it was done!"

HE shoved Dawson over with El Lobo and the gang, then turned back to Nugget Jones. "This coyote double-crossed all of us, planned to split with El Lobo. So I told him of my plan deliberately. El Lobo would think Dawson was very clever, believing that he knew our plan, and would completely overlook the real trick!"

"What was that?" asked Nugget.

Randal smiled. "Making El Lobo bite twice on the same trick!"

"Only this time loaded for the payoff, eh?" Jones quipped. "And our gold—that's safe?"

"Safe as a baby, stashed away right there in my case of blasting powder," smiled Randal. "I just kinda reversed things a bit."

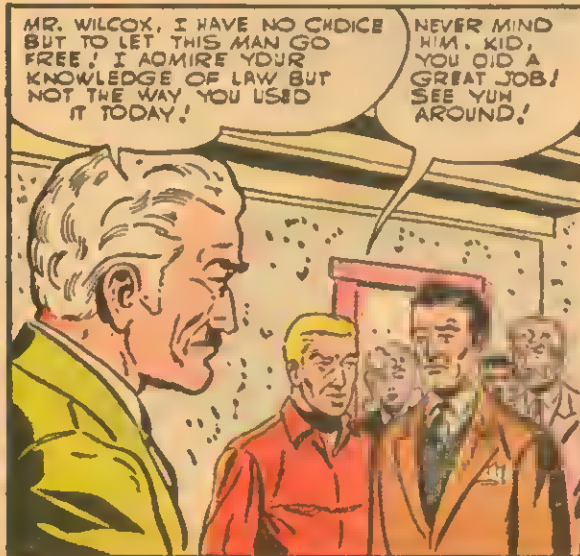
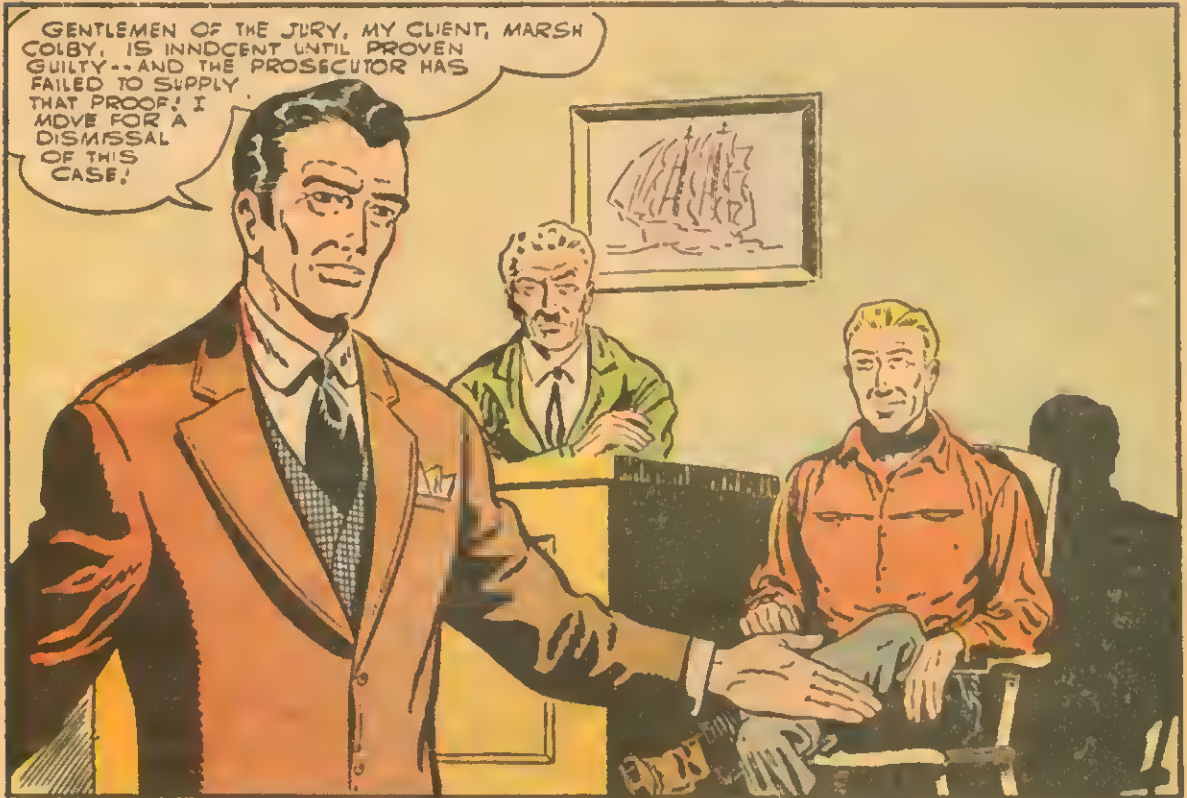
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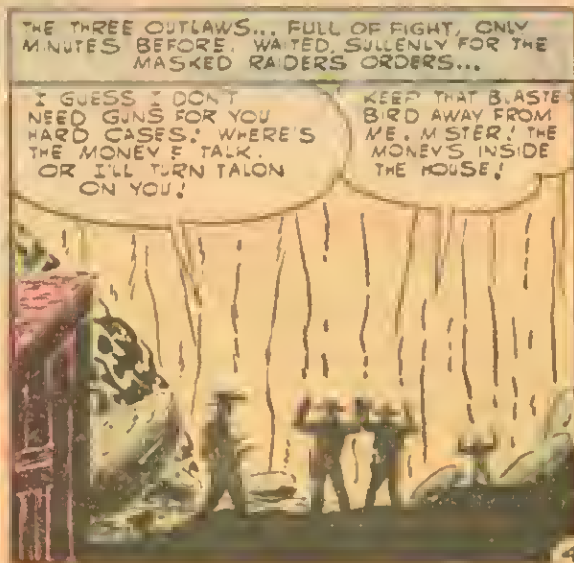
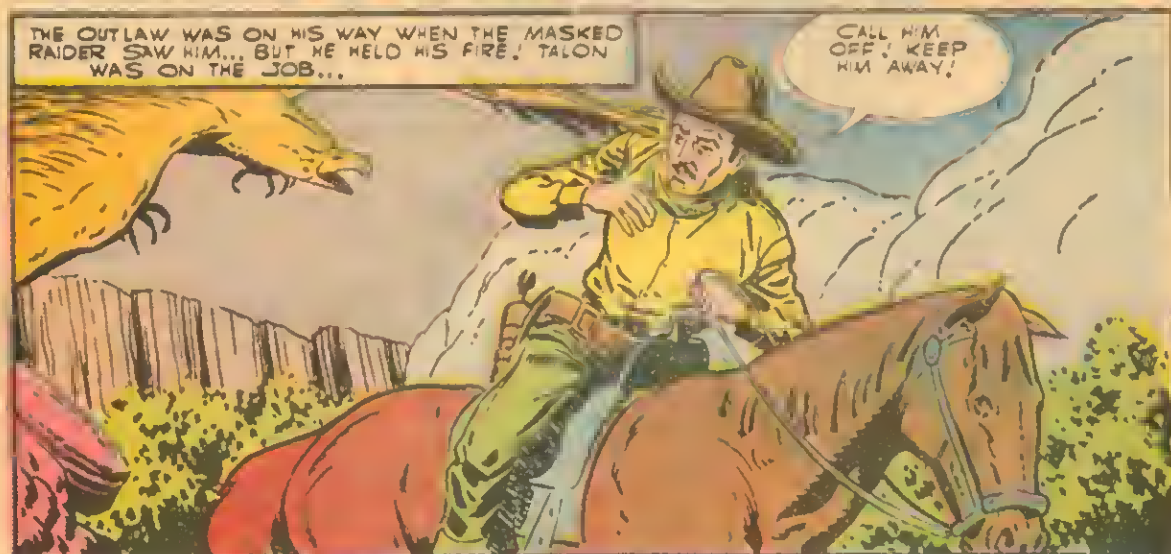
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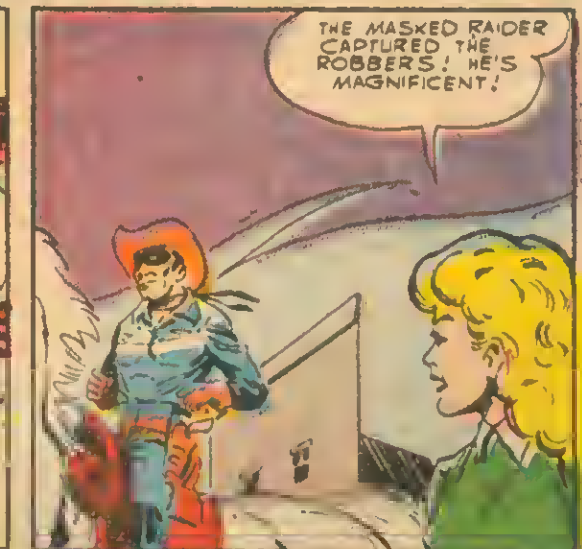
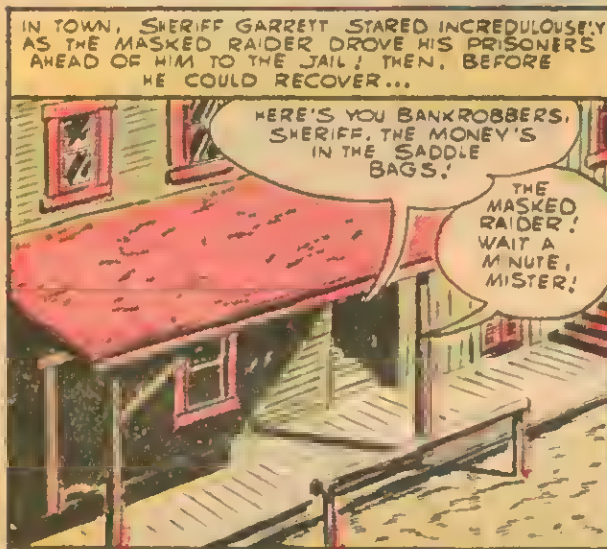
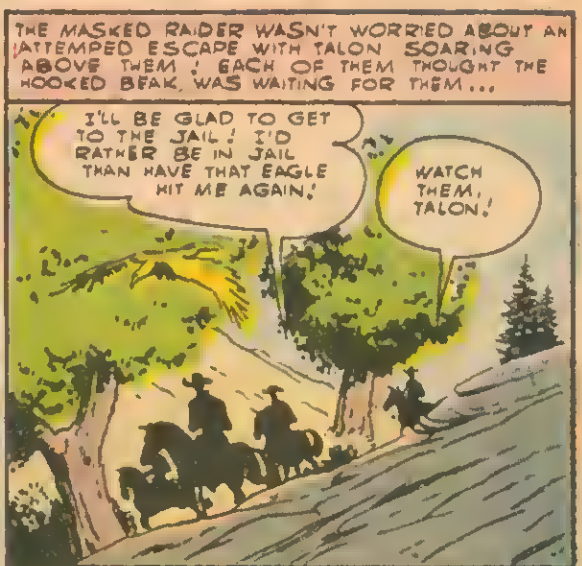
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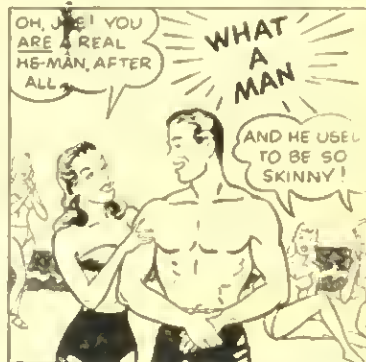
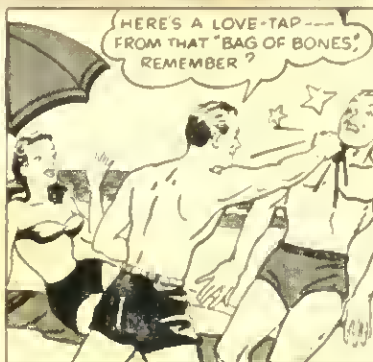
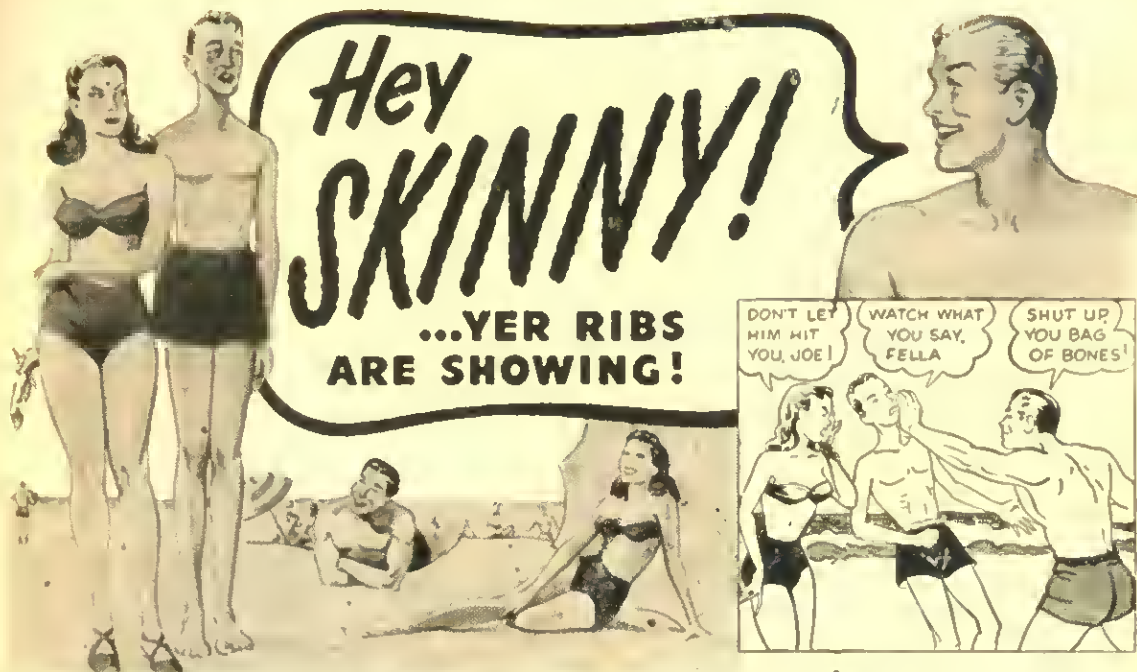
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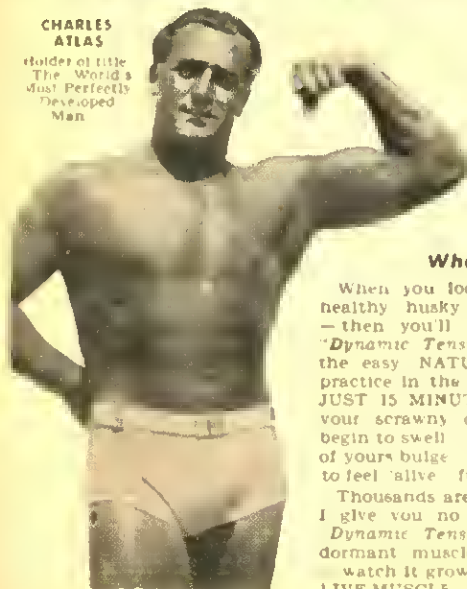
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